

# WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE AND RUN FOR OFFICE



*Did you know that Governor Jennifer M. Granholm is Michigan's first woman governor; and in 2007, there were 9 women governors?*

*Did you know that since 1789, only 2 percent of all members in the United States Congress have been women?*

*Did you know that women hold only 16.1 percent of the seats in the U.S. Congress, while Sweden's parliament\* is 47 percent women in 2007?*

*Did you know that in 2007, Michigan women held 24 percent of the State Senate seats (9 of 30 seats) and 18 percent (20 of 110 seats) in the State House of Representatives?*

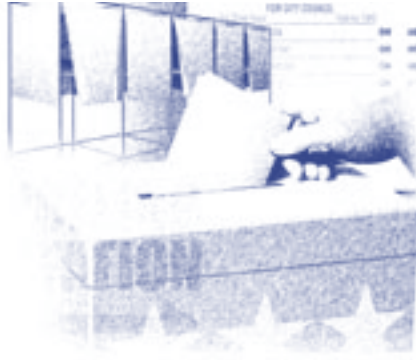
*Did you know that Michigan ranks 31st of the fifty states in women's participation in the Legislature in 2007?*

*Sources: Center for American Women in Politics, The White House Project, Michigan Women's Commission, \*Inter-Parliamentary Union*

# VOTE

Voting is the easiest way to be involved in the decisions that impact you, such as:

- Health insurance
- Domestic violence
- Employment
- Education
- Economic empowerment



## ***To Register to Vote You Must Be:***

a resident of Michigan and the city or township where you are applying to register to vote

a citizen of the United States of America  
at least 18 years of age by election day  
not serving a sentence in jail or prison

## ***Registering to Vote in Michigan:***

Your voter registration and driver license address must be the same, and you must complete the State of Michigan Voter Registration Application, available from your county clerk or on the web at [www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos).

**If registering to vote in Michigan for the first time**, you must meet new identification requirements provided under federal law. You must accurately enter your state-issued driver license number or personal ID card number, or send a copy of a paycheck stub or a government document which lists your name and address. The identification requirement does not apply if (1) you personally hand deliver the registration application form to your county, city or township clerk's office instead of mailing this form (2) you are disabled or (3) you are eligible to vote under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.

## ***Voting:***

Every voter will need to show a picture identification or sign an affidavit if no picture ID is available. A Michigan driver's license, state-issued personal ID card, US Passport, or Student, Tribal or Military ID will satisfy this requirement. Voters who have none of these can still vote if they sign an affidavit swearing to their identity. For more information go to [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote).

The Michigan Supreme Court opinion issued July 18, 2007, requiring voters to present photo ID at the polls, makes Michigan one of only nine states to do so.

## ***To Vote by Absentee Ballot:***

As a **registered** voter, you may obtain an absentee voter ballot if you are:

- age 60 years old or older
- unable to vote without assistance at the polls
- expecting to be out of town on election day
- in jail awaiting arraignment or trial
- unable to attend the polls due to religious reasons
- appointed to work as an election inspector in a precinct outside of your precinct of residence.

A person who registers to vote by mail must vote in person in the first election in which he or she participates or ask for an absentee ballot in person. The restriction does not apply to overseas voters, voters who are handicapped or voters who are 60 years of age or older.

## ***Requesting an Absentee Voter Ballot:***

Your request for an absentee voter ballot must be in writing and must be submitted to your city or township clerk. (For assistance in obtaining the address of your city or township clerk, see [www.Michigan.gov/vote](http://www.Michigan.gov/vote)) Your request must include one of the six statutory reasons stated above and your signature. You must request an absentee voter ballot by mailing the online application, a letter, a postcard, or a pre-printed application form obtained from your local clerk's office.

Requests to have an absentee voter ballot mailed to you must be received by your clerk no later than 2 p.m. the Saturday before the election.

After receiving your absentee voter ballot, you have until 8 p.m. on election day to complete the ballot and return it to the clerk's office. Your ballot will not be counted unless your signature is on the return envelope and matches your signature on file. If you received assistance voting the ballot, then the signature of the person who helped you must also be on the return envelope. Only you, a family member or person residing in your household, a mail carrier, or election official is authorized to deliver your signed absentee voter ballot to your clerk's office.

In an emergency, such as a sudden illness or family death, that prevents you from reaching the polls on election day, you may request an emergency absentee voter ballot. Requests for an emergency ballot must be submitted after the deadline for regular absentee voter ballots has passed but before 4 p.m. on election day. The emergency must have occurred at a time which made it impossible for you to apply for a regular absentee voter ballot. Your local clerk will have more information about emergency absentee voter ballots.

## RUNNING FOR OFFICE

### ***Women in public office***

In the last 100 years, women in government have made great strides – from the 19th amendment which granted women the right to vote, to the first African American woman elected in the U.S. Senate, Carol Moseley Braun, to Michigan's first female Governor, Jennifer M. Granholm. Unfortunately in Michigan, the number of women in public office is declining.



Women in government are needed because:

- Constituents benefit greatly when there is a broad representation of public office holders.
- Women can help to develop policies which take into account the needs of all constituents, including the unique needs of women.
- Women in office serve as leaders, mentors, role models and guides for other women.

Women make good candidates. They

- are caring, compassionate, and believe in interdependence and inclusiveness
- tackle tough issues, such as
  - health
  - school safety and anti-bullying
  - campaign finance reform
  - anti-discrimination
  - pay equity
  - literacy
  - child care standards and funding

Women can get the job done by bringing out the best in others

***Does this sound like you? Then you should consider running for office!***

More things to consider before you run

- Choosing which race is right for you
- Assessing your knowledge of issues relevant to constituents
- Learning voter demographics and history
- Researching your opponent(s)
- Considering how running will affect your family and work
- Learning about election laws & regulations
- Developing your campaign committee
- Financing your campaign
- Fundraising
- Constructing your campaign strategy
- Considering your public image and public speaking abilities
- Developing your message to the voters
- Working with the media

## ***What office should you run for?***

So maybe you don't want to run for Congress! There are plenty of locally elected positions that need passionate, qualified candidates, including:

- Michigan House of Representatives
- Michigan Senate
- City Council
- Mayor
- Judge
- County Commissioner
- County clerk
- Sheriff
- School Board
- Library Board

## ***Things to consider when deciding to run for office:***

- What do you want to do to improve the quality of life in your area?
- Are you respected? Why?
- Are there issues that you are passionate about? Can you convey these to others?
- Is there an open seat or a weak incumbent?

***So you decided to run! Congratulations!***

## ***Tips for the campaign:***

- Have a written plan. This will help time management, measure progress, help set priorities and provide a general blueprint. Remember a failure to plan is a plan for failure!
- Have a campaign strategy. Decide on organization and message. Identify targeted voters and get out the vote!
- Develop a simple, concise, easy to remember message. Make sure it is believable and voters can identify with it!
- Communicate with voters with mailings door to door, signs, media, endorsements and at community events
- FUNDRAISE! The more you fundraise the more people hear your message.

## ***REMEMBER!***

Even if you have no desire to run for office, it is your responsibility to encourage other women to run. Work on a campaign. And make sure to VOTE!

## ***Sources:***

Campbell & Wolbrecht, 2006, *The Journal of Politics* 68 (2),

Gerrity, J. et al., 2007, *Politics and Gender* 3 (2),

Fraga, L. et al., 2007, *Journal of Women, Politics and Policy* 28 (3/4),

Carroll, S., 2001, *The Impact of Women in Public Office*,

Dodson, D., 2006, *The Impact of Women in Congress*, Michigan Department of Secretary of State.

# **RESOURCES**

**Center for  
American Women  
and Politics,  
Rutgers University**  
191 Ryders Lane  
New Brunswick, NJ  
08901-8557  
(732) 932-9384  
<http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cawp/>

**Center for Political  
Leadership  
Michigan**  
104 W. Fourth St, Ste. 306  
Royal Oak, MI 48067  
(248) 399-2053  
[www.progressleaders.org](http://www.progressleaders.org)

**EMILY's List**  
1120 Connecticut Avenue NW  
Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20036  
Telephone: (202) 326-1400  
<http://www.emilyslist.org>



**Green Party of Michigan**

<http://migreens.org>

**International Women's Democracy Center**

1730 Rhode Island Ave., NW  
Ste. 715

Washington, DC 20036

Telephone: (202) 530-0563

<http://www.iwdc.org/>

**Libertarian Party of Michigan**

913 W. Holmes Road

Lansing, MI 48910

Telephone: 1-888-FREENOW

<http://www.mi.lp.org/>

**Michigan Democratic Party**

606 Townsend Street

Lansing, MI 48933

Telephone: (517) 371-5410

<http://www.michigandems.com>

**Michigan Political Leadership Program (MPLP)**

Michigan State University, 321 Berkley Hall  
East Lansing, MI 48824

Telephone: (517) 353-0891

<http://www.ippsr.msu.edu/MPLP/>

**Michigan Republican Party**

Secchia-Weiser Michigan Republican Center  
520 Seymour Street

Lansing, MI 48933

Telephone: (517) 487-5413

<http://www.migop.org>

**The Michigan Secretary of State**

Michigan Department of State

Lansing, MI 48918

(517) 322-1460

<http://www.michigan.gov/sos/>

**National Federation of Republican Women**

124 N. Alfred Street

Alexandria, VA 22314

Telephone: (703) 548 9688

<http://www.nfrw.org/>

**Republican Women's Federation of Michigan**

10200 S. Tower Rd

Maple City, MI 49664

Telephone: (231) 228-6834

<http://www.rwfrm.net>

**The National Women's Political Caucus**

1634 Eye Street, N.W.

Ste. 310

Washington, D.C., 20006

Phone: (202) 785-1100

<http://www.nwpc.org>

**The Susan B. Anthony List**

1420 King Street, Ste. 550

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Telephone: (703) 683-5558

<http://www.sba-list.org>

**U.S. Census Bureau State & County Quickfacts**

<http://quickfacts.census.gov>

**The White House Project**

161 Ottawa Avenue, NW #305-C

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

(616) 454-8836

**Women's Campaign Forum**

734 15th Street, NW Suite 500

Washington, DC 20005

(202) 393-8164

<http://www.wcfonline.org/>

*For a complete list of Michigan women's organizations, please go to the MWC website at [www.michigan.gov/mdcr](http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr)*

**Michigan Women's Commission**  
**110 West Michigan, Suite 800**  
**Lansing, Michigan 48933**  
**(517) 373-2884 fax: (517) 335-1649**  
**[www.michigan.gov/mdcr](http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr)**

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## **The Election Dates:**

**January 15, 2008 – President Primary**  
*Register by December 17, 2007*

**May 6, 2008 – School and Local Elections**  
*Register by April 7, 2008*

**August 5, 2008 – State Primary**  
*Register by July 7, 2008*

**November 4, 2008 – General Election**  
*Register by October 6, 2008*